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William S Van Allen 04/19/2002 09:44:08 AM From DB/Inbox: William S Van Allen

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TELEGRAM

April 18, 2002

To: SECSTATE WASHDC - ROUTINE
Action: WHA
From: AMEMBASSY CARACAS (CARACAS 1065 - ROUTINE)
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, ASEC, VE
Captions: None
Subject: OPPOSITION EXHORTS HELP FROM OAS SEC GEN GAVIRIA
Ref: None

(U) The Opposition Bloc of the National Assembly sent a letter to OAS General Secretary Cesar Gaviria offering their perspective on the Venezuelan political crisis and their suggestions on how the OAS might help resolve it. The letter is signed by 57 politicians from Accion Democratica, Alianza Bravo Pueblo, COPEI, MAS, Parliamentary Transparency, Primero Justicia, Proyecto Venezuela, and the Social Democratic Group. Begin Text:

Senor Don
Cesar Gaviria
Secretary General of
The Organization of American States

Mr. General Secretary:

Those who have signed the following document, parliamentary representatives of the Venezuelan political parties, respectfully send this to you in order to present our shared vision about the governability crisis Venezuela currently is going through.

The events that occurred in the past several days do not constitute isolated events. They represent the culmination of a long and profound process of deterioration of democratic institutions whose historical references in dates such as February 27, 1989 [the Caracazo rioting] and February 4, 1992 [Chavez's failed coup] mark the beginning of a culture of violence that as a society we have not been able to solve.

From the time of President Hugo Chavez's democratic assumption of power, this culture of violence and alienation has worsened to the point of capturing the very essence of institutions and society.

Dialogue, as the principal tool in a system of democratic coexistence, has disappeared. Civic guarantees have been annulled before institutions of justice that have been fully suborned.

Armed men and terrorists linked to the government, the appearance of death squads, the targeting of the military, the threatening of journalists, the pressure on the communications media, the use of the Judicial Branch as a means of official pressure, the violence against parliamentarians, and the intolerance of minority groups have fragmented the society and undermined the social peace.

Fundamental social institutions like the Church, the business community, the NGOs, the communications media, the political parties, the Armed Forces, and the labor

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: JOHN L MILLS
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organizations have denounced the violence, the arbitrary state interventions, the disrespect for the constitution and international agreements, as well as the alteration of our democratic values.

As of this date it is impossible to restore governability given the fragmentation that the country is suffering as a whole in all aspects of political and social legitimacy.

By virtue of this, the parliamentary groups and the Venezuelan political parties solicit your good offices in order that the Organization of American States can lead the following initiatives:

1) Assist in the creation of a Truth Commission through the Interamerican Commission of Human Rights of the OAS with the object of investigating all the events the Venezuelan society went through in the last two weeks.

2) Solicit the OAS through the Secretariat General to work as an arbiter and mediator among all Venezuelan sectors for the purpose of recovering in an orchestrated manner democratic governability through the prompt realization of elections.

3) In relation to the foregoing items, we appeal to the precedents that the OAS has performed in the Peruvian case and other countries of Central America.

4) Likewise we request the OAS to become the institution that follows up the agreement entered into as a result of the previously requested dialogue.

5) We also request that the determination of the degree to which the provisions set forth in the Interamerican Democratic Charter have been respected which guarantee citizens the benefits of democratic performance and the respect of the institutions of the representative democracy by the elected leaders as well as the corresponding qualification of democratic legitimacy of the current government, considering the elements of the above mentioned political situation.

6) Exhort the disarming of the groups aligned with the government.

7) The respect of the physical integrity and human rights by means of concrete actions by the government.

Dear Mr. General Secretary Gaviria, in the name of the peaceful majority, we reiterate our request so that your good offices enable a democratic solution for Venezuela. We trust that our statements are welcomed by the Organization of the American States. End Text.

Shapiro.

Additional Addressees:
None

cc:

AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
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